



Costa Mesa Conference & Visitor Bureau Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 3, 2013 NOON

Crowne Plaza Costa Mesa, 3131 Bristol Street

Attendees: Charles Haber (Secretary and GM of Crowne Plaza), Mike Hall (Chairman of the Board and GM of The Westin South Coast Plaza), Sue Cooke (Treasurer and GM of Residence Inn by Marriott), Naj Ekhals (GM of Best Western Plus), Stephanie Escamilla (GM Holiday Inn Express), Paul Sanford (GM Avenue of the Arts, Wyndham), Chris Ramirez (GM of Ramada), Tom Hatch (CEO for City of Costa Mesa), Werner Escher (Executive Director of Domestic and International Markets) Lisa Janulewicz (Operations Manager, CVB) and Paulette Lombardi-Fries (President, CVB).

Absent: Rob Gauthier (GM of Hilton), Kandee Anderson (GM of Marriott), Susan O'Brien Moore (VP and GM of Ayres Hotel and Suites) and Gary Monahan (Councilmember, city of Costa Mesa).

Public Comment – no comments or guests for this meeting were noted

Board Update

- Paulette stated that Tom Hatch as CEO can appoint two people to sit on the CVB Board including himself and that he would be joining the Board for now. Mike Hall made a motion to approve and Sue Cooke seconded, no one opposed.

Review of June Meeting Minutes & Emergency Meeting Minutes for August 2013

- Motion made to approve June Board and August conference call meeting minutes by Mike Hall, Paul Sanford, and Charles Haber.

Financial Report

- Paulette asked for everyone to review the June 2013 fiscal year end financials. She stated we ended the year 11% over budget in BIA funds and all excess funds went to marketing. Some of the items the excess went towards was the 50 Reasons to Stay AMEX package and the creation of an art walk map. 72% of the total budget for fiscal year ending June 2013 went to marketing. Mike asked about the current fiscal year budget and Lisa explained we are budgeted to come in at \$2.1M, which would be flat this last year. Paulette mentioned that one BIA check for this fiscal year has already come in \$22k under budget and that occupancy with most likely not grow but the opportunity for our hotels is in ADR. Paulette stated that we budget conservatively. Motion to approve financials for year-end June 2013 made by Tom and Sue. No one opposed.
- Board reviewed July financials, motion to approve by Charles & Paul. No one opposed.
- Board reviewed August financials, motion to approve by Sue & Paul. No one opposed.

Costa Mesa Restaurant Week Review

- Paulette stated we had 6 new restaurants participating in CMRW this year and had 39,000 visits to our site, which is a 44% increase YOY. This increase was a result of some new marketing we did with ads on buses, North OC bus bench ad expansion, Orange Coast Magazine, South Coast Plaza as well as various eBlasts. Paulette passed around examples of some of the CMRW marketing (bus stop ads, OC Weekly banner ads and eBlasts, Locale Magazine EBlast, SCP inside ads, 10 bus wrap around ads, Daily Pilot banner ads, OC Fair Competition). Kim will put together everything we did this year vs. last year after the court case is over and she returns from China. Paulette will send out a survey monkey and share the results at the next board meeting. Lisa reviewed the CMRW P&L (see handout). Mike asked if we should stick with the same charity (Someone Cares Soup Kitchen) for the next CMRW. Tom Hatch mentioned that the city plans to assist the Costa Mesa homeless population and wants to partner with local charities including the Someone Cares Soup Kitchen to focus specifically on Costa Mesa residents. Werner added that the Daily Pilot has stated that Costa Mesa had done a lot for the homeless population.

Marketing Update

- Paulette reviewed the 50 Reasons package results. We did 847 room nights and could have done more but happily the hotels were running 90% occupancy in the month of August. The CVB wants to look at the months we are launching this promotion, as we know everyone has AMEX cards left. Naj mentioned the allotment and thought the hotels should be able to use the gift cards whenever they wanted. Charles stated his hotel would like to use their remaining cards now. Paulette stated that last time we discussed this package we voted for the allotment and the time frame we would have this promotion available. We need to take a vote on two different items, the hotels being able to sell the 50 Reasons package whenever they choose and also what time frame the CVB would put marketing effort and dollars behind this package. Motion to have hotels use up their remaining AMEX cards and sell 50 Reasons whenever they choose was made by Charles, Mike, and Sue. No one opposed. Everyone agreed holidays are a need time and that the CVB would promote 50 Reasons from Nov. 15th-Jan 5th. Motion to approve by Chris and Paul. No one opposed.
- Paulette and Kim leave for China on Monday, October 7th with the Orange County Visitor Association-China Initiative trip. Paulette showed the new CVB Chinese website to the group. Paulette also passed out the itinerary, which includes two press conferences in the cities of Beijing and Shanghai and several appointment calls with various tour groups in China.
- Paulette shared that the OC Marathon will be held on May 4, 2014. Hotels should have heard from Gary as it relates to 2014 rates.
- Paulette also passed out Angelitos cards explaining it is a fundraiser for Big Brother Big Sisters of Orange County. Proceeds from purchasing the Angelitos card benefits the organization and provides the purchaser discounts at 120 participating South Coast Plaza stores.

City Updates

- Tom Hatch shared that the city has 410 positions down from 611 in past years and plans to stay there and be a smart government. There was a \$7M surplus from last years budget, which is 7% of the city budget. With this surplus they plan to add to the info structure including resurfacing streets. He also mentioned that Costa Mesa schools are improving and the CMHS added Chinese to the languages they are teaching.

Meeting adjourned at 1:43 p.m. Next meeting is in December where the sales leaders will be invited.